

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 08934 031700Z

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-10 AID-05

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----- 045279

R 031505Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9691

INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

USIA WASHDC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 8934

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IN

SUBJ: EMBASSY REPRESENTATIONS TO GOI ON ANTI-U.S.

ALLGATIONS IN CENSORED INDIAN PRESS

REF: NEW DELHI 8751

SUMMARY: IN RESPONSE TO REPRESENTATION BY PAO CONCERNING ANTI-US ALLEGATIONS APPEARING IN THE NOW-CENSORED INDIAN PRESS, PRESS CHIEF OF MEA IMPLICITLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT CENSORSHIP RULES CARRY NEW GOI RESPONSIBILITIES. HE AGREED THAT FURTHER CASES SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO MEA'S ATTENTION. SEPARATELY, PRINCIPAL INFORMATION OFFICER, MOI/B, "PERSONALLY" DEPLORED SUCH STORIES, BUT REFERRED MATTER BACK TO MEA. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING UP A/DCM'S RECENT CALL ON TEJA (SEE REFTTEL, PAO TODAY CALLED SEPARATELY ON A.N.D. HAKSAR, JOINT SECRETARY, EXTERNAL PUBLICITY, MEA AND DR. A.R. BAJI, PRINCIPAL INFO OFFICER (AND NOW CHIEF CENSOR) PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU, MIN OF INFO AND BROADCASTING, TO CALL ATTENTION TO ANTI-US
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PAGE 02 NEW DE 08934 031700Z

ALLEGATIONS IN THE NOW-CENSORED INDIAN

PRESS.

2. BOTH LISTENED ATTENTIVELY TO PRESENTATION: THAT WHILE US IS OPPOSED TO CENSORSHIP ANYWHERE, WE EXPECT FRIENDLY GOVERNMENT IN IMPOSING CENSORSHIP TO USE ITS POWER ALSO TO PROHIBIT FALSE AND MALICIOUS MEDIA ALLEGATIONS AGAINST THE U.S. YET JUNE 28 BLITZ LEAD STORY SAID THAT PRIME MINISTER'S INTELLIGENCE SOURCES "REPORTED TO HER THE EMERGENCE OF A FASCISTS CONSPIRACY IN INDIA BACKED BY THE UNITED STATES", THAT AMERICAN LEADERS "HOLD INDIRA GANDHI AND HER GOVERNMENT AS AMERICA'S PUBLIC ENEMY NO 1.." AND THAT "A MASTERPLOT TO OVERTHROW THE INDIRA GANDHI GOVERNMENT BY JUNE 1975 HAD BEEN DESIGNED ALL THE WAY DOWN FROM WASHINGTON TO NEW DELHI." CPI ORGAN, NEW AGE, OF JUNE 29 CARRIED STORY ON "U.S. INCITEMENT OF (INDIAN) ARMED FORCES." PAO SAID WE WILL BE WATCHING INDIAN MEDIA, INCLUDING THE VERNACULAR PRESS, AND WILL BE BRINGING ANY FURTHER EXAMPLES OF SUCH ANTI-US MATERIAL TO MEA'S ATTENTION.

3. HAKSAR STATED THAT BOTH PAPERS HAD BEEN PRINTED WEDNESDAY NIGHT, WHILE THE EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION AND CENSORSHIP WERE PROCLAIMED ONLY ON THURSDAY MORNING, JUNE 26.

4. HAKSAR SAID HE WAS WELL AWARE OF A/DCM-TEJA DISCUSSION, BUT USG SHOULD REALIZE THAT CENSORSHIP IN INDIA WAS ONLY "PARTIAL," RELATING PRIMARILY TO SUBJECT MATTERS SURROUNDING THE EMERGENCY. HENCE GOI COULD NOT PROPERLY BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR EVERYTHING THAT APPEARED IN INDIA MEDIA, EVEN UNDER CENSORSHIP.

5. PAO POINTED OUT THAT WHILE IN THE PAST WE HAD OFTEN BEEN UNHAPPY ABOUT BLATANT ANTI-US PROPAGANDA IN INDIA MEDIA, OUR OFFICIAL CONCERN AND OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIONS RELATED TO STORIES THAT ALLEGED U.S. INTERVENTION IN INDIAN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, ESPECIALLY WHEN THESE WERE SOURCED TO INDIAN OFFICIALS. BOTH ARTICLES UNDER DISCUSSION CLEARLY PURPORT TO EXPLAIN THE "CONSPIRACY" THAT EVOKED "THE EMERGENCY." HAKSAR AGREED, BUT SHIFTED GROUND TO ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS OF HUMAN ERROR OF UNTRAINED CENSORS AND FACT THAT LARGE SECTORS OF NEWS, ESPECIALLY FOREIGN AFFAIRS REPORTING, WOULD REMAIN OUTSIDE THE CENSOR'S PURVIEW. HE AGREED THAT WE SHOULD IN FUTURE CONTINUE TO CALL OUR PROBLEMS WITH NEWS REPORTS TO MEA'S LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 08934 031700Z

ATTENTION AS WE HAD DONE IN THE PAST.

6. IN SUBSEQUENT CALL ON BAJI, HE SAID THAT "PERSONALLY," HE WOULD WANT TO SEE SUCH STORIES PROHIBITED. BUT, HE SAID, I AM ONLY A CENSOR AND TAKE THE POLICY GUIDANCE I AM GIVEN. I SHOULD NOT BE TALKING TO YOU ON THIS. SUCH PROBLEMS SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO MEA.

7. COMMENT: IT SEEMS CLEAR FROM CALL ON HAKSAR THAT MEA HAD
ALREADY "GOTTEN THE MESSAGE" BASED ON A/DCM-TEJA DISCUSSION.
HAKSAR SOUGHT LESS TO DENY NEW GOI RESPONSIBILITY, THAN ARGUE
THAT WE SHOULD TAKE A "REASONABLE" VIEW OF GOI'S ABILITY TO
TO CONTROL EVERYTHING IN THE MEDIA. TRANSLATED, THIS MORE LIKELY
REPRESENTS HIS RESERVATIONS ABOUT MEA'S CLOUT WHERE TOP-LEVEL
DECISIONS ARE BEING MADE ON CENSORSHIP BASED ON DOMESTIC POLITICAL
CONSIDERATIONS. ANYWAY, THE GOI, INCLUDING ITS CHIEF
CENSOR, HAS BEEN PUT ON NOTICE. WE INTEND TO FOLLOW UP PROMPTLY
WHENEVER WARRANTED.
SAXBE

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